A byefe and

plaine declaracion of certayne

sentẽces in this litle boke folowing, to satisfie the consciences of them that haue iudged me therby to be a fauourer of the Anabaptistes.

☞ Eccle'ia. xxiiii.

¶ All these thynges contayneth the booke of lyfe, the testamẽt of the hyghest, and the confession of the truth.

☞ Suffer the infantes to come vnto me and forbydde them not: for vnto suche, the kyngdome of God is due. Mark. x.

AFter I had setfurth thys lytle booke to the intent that the faythfull reader might therby be stered vp and prouoked to pray wout ceasyng, ꝑ the detractours and defamours of the faythfull professours of ꝑ faith of Christ, might ether be made fauourers & setters furth of the same: other elsso cõfounded and dashed out of countenaũce through the Godlye conuersation of the true and vnfayned professours of the pure Euangelike doctrine, that they myght not for verye worldly shame once open their lippes to speak anye euyl worde of them: incontinent the Deuyl who hath alwayes indeuoured to stoppe and hynder the glory of God and the prosyte of hys membres (the faythfull congregation) put into the myndes of certayne learned men, (who also are erneste defenders & setters furth of the truthe) to reporte and affyrme thys my facte, to bee a mayntenaunce and vpholdyng of the Anabaptistes opinion, whiche denied it to be lawful to Baptise the Infantes & yong childzen which are not of yeares of descresion to know and confesse the fayth of Jesu Christ. Not muche vnlyke is this subtyle practise of oure goostlye aduersarie, vnto that whyche he wrought in the tyme of Christes passion. He dyd then beate into the head of Pilates wyfe suche kynde of dreames: that she was thereby moued to send worde to her husbande that in no case he shoulde geue sentence agaynst that iust man Jesus Christ, whom the Jewes had than brought before hym, requiryng hym to geue sentence of death vpon hym, because he sayde that he was the sonne of God. Thys pro-

proceaded not of anye desyre that he had, that Pilate should not commyt so haynous a faut as to geue sentence agaynst that most innocēt and immaculate lambe Jesu Chryst: but of ꝑ greate ranker & malice that he bare towardes man, who could not otherwyse be restored thē by the bloudshed of that most pure and innocent lambe Jesu Chryst. Euen so (most dearly beloued) in this present practise, our goostly enemy intented not to roote out the errour of the Anabaptistes oute of the myndes of men: but because he perceiueth ꝑ the very name of thē is so odious to ꝑ faithfull, ꝑ they thinke their bokes vnworthy to be had among christē mē: he thought ꝑ he myght by no meanes so sonebryng me out of credite w̄ the cōgregatiō as if he myght procure some man (whose authoritie is greate in the congregation) to geue me the name of a fauourer of that moost wicked and dyuelish opinion: and so to cause mē to refrayne this boke, least they should by the readyng therof, take any vtilitie or profyt.

But, as the spirit of God shalbe my guyde, so wyl I declare, not onely that I am none of the fauourers and maintainers of that detestable errour, but also that I do (as muche as in me lieth) impugne and resist the same, so that, that wicked serpent, shalbe by the same meanes defeated of his purpose: by whiche he intended to haue spoyled the of thy commoditie. Fyrst thou shalt note that I am no fauourer of them or theyr opinions, for that I shall playnelye declare that the scriptures whyche they alledge, make nothynge for their purpose And thē, that I do in al that I may impugne

them, by that I shal endeuour to establysh & cõ fyrmeby the scriptures: the contrarye of their opinion. For the fyrst thou shalt note, that the ground of their opinió is vpon the order that the Euangelist Mark kepeth in the rehersing of the wordes of Christ to his Apostles when he sent thẽ to preach. Marke. xvi. Fayth saye they, dothe in the wordes of Chryst go before Baptisme. Necessarye is it therefore, that he that shalbe Baptised do first beleue. But the Infantes (which haue not the vse of reason) cannot vnderstande the fayth of Chryst (and muche lesse embrace and professe it) wherfore, it cannot stande with the worde of God that Infantes should be baptised. No doubt (christen reader) it is not possible that any shoulde be acceptable before God, without fayth. For so writeth Paul to the Hebrues. xi. And truth it is also, that fayth must go before baptisme, none other wyse then the cause proceadeth or goeth before the effect or thyng that commeth thereof, as the tree must neades be before the fruit that it beareth. And it is also infallibly true, that the Baptisme whiche is acceptable before God must neades springe out of fayth But to inferre vpon this, that the Infantes and yong chyldren oughte not to be baptised; is far wyde from the true meanynge of these places of scripture. And ꝓ shal easely appeare to them that lyst to weygh the circumstaunces of the places so that thei may conceiue the whole intent and purpose of the wryter.

First for the wordes of our sauiour Christ in Mark, thei wer the wordes of commission geuen to the Apostles, that they shuld go into

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the whole worlde and preach the Gospell vnto all creatures. These wordes sowne, that the Apostles myght not chose them anye peculiar nacion to preach vnto, nether Jewe nor Gentyle, nother Greke nor Romain. But their cõmission was into al the worlde, yea. & to preach to all creatures the Gospel of God. No nacion, no estate, condicion or degree, excepted. As wel were they bound to preache to the plowman as to the prynce, as well to the labourer, as to the lorde. God hath no respect to the person, All the sonnes of Adam are of one degree in the syght of the Lorde. Here was no mencion made Infantes neither of anye other age. But I am sure ther is no man so farre wyde as once to thynke that the Apostles were here in commaunded to preache vnto Infantes. For they as beastes lacking the vse of reason cannot receiue the fayth that hath his begynnyng of hearyng (as saynt Paull wryteth) in this text therefore is no precepte of Infantes ether for the Baptisynge of theim other elles the leauyng of them vnbaptised. The precept that is heare geuen is none other but to go in to al the worlde and to preach the Gospel to al nations, estates and degrees. Then is there annexed the promyse of the free mercye of God towardes all the worlde, that is, that whosoeuer should beleaue and be baptised should be saued, but he that wyl not beleue shalbe condemned. Here is it manifest, that without beleue, Baptisme auayleth not. For he that wyl not beleue shalbe condempned. But heare we must beware that we do not by these wordes condemne all Infantes and yong chyldren, be

cause they haue not the power to vnderstande and beleue. For this part of ꝑ text pertaineth no more vnto them, thē the other (concerning the precept of the preachyng) doth. This place of scripture therfore, is to be vnderstanded of them onely that haue the vse of reasone to perceiue and vnderstāde the preachyng of the gospell: and yet wyll not embrace it, and receyue baptisme, the signe of the washynge of theyr sinnes by the precious blonde of our sauiour Christe shedde for the redēption of the world. As for the other texte, that is of Paule to the Hebrues the. xi. chapit. wherin is declared that without faieth non can be acceptable to God: apparteyneth also vnto suche as are of yeres of discrecio. For in al the chapter, is ther none rehersed but such as were of age & discrecion. Wherfore we maye iustly inferre herof, that it is not possible that any persone shoulde bee acceptable vnto god in hys workes, without the worke that he doeth, do proceade of a pure and sincere fayth. For as the prophet Esaye, sayth in his. lxiiii. chap. Our workes are al as the cloth ꝑ is defiled with menstruous bloud. And further, s. Paule to the Romaynes. xiiii The workes that procede not of fayth are sin Fayth it is therfore that maketh our doinges acceptable vnto God, and without fayth nothyng that we doo is acceptable. Wherupon I inferr that excepte the congregation whych Baptise theyr chyldrē do it of faith: this their Baptisyng is synne in the syght of God, and therfore not acceptable vnto God. But if thei do it of fayth trusting that God shal plant in the hertes of the infantes that lyuynge fayth

that

that may cause them to confesse his name whē they shal receyue the vse of reasō: then is this their facte no lesse acceptable before God then the deede of Abraham was when he vpon the fayth that he had in the promyse of God: Circūcised al the males of hys housholde. For as Circumcision was a signe or token to declare that all they that receiued it, trusted to bee redeamed by the Messias that was promysed to the sayde Abraham, and as the fathers to declare their faythful hope, dyd not onely circumcise theim selues, but their chyldren and familes also: so is Baptisme a signe to declare that the receiuers therof, doo vnfaynedly beleue that ꝑ bloud of Chryst hath washed their synnes. And vppon lyke trust as the fathers had, that God wylerēd his mercy vnto their chyldren and family: they do baptise them also, as appeareth in the actes of the Apostles, wher is mencion made of certayne mē whose families and housholdes were Baptised whē thei had receiued the fayth But here it myght be sayd that in these places it is mēcioned that the whole familes beleued and then receiued Baptisme. So that the infantes (whych had no beleue) remayned styll vnbaptised. Wherevnto I aunswere, that if the ꝓgenytes were faithful, they coulde not chose but their fayth would constrayne them to do as those fayth ful dyd ꝑ brought their chyldren vnto Christ, Marke. x. And then the Apostles I am sure were not so forgetfull but that they bare in mynde the wordes of their maister who rebuked thē for forbidding the children to approch hym, whych were brought by their faythfull

parentes

parentes that he myght put hys hand on them Yea, I doubte not but that after the example of theyr maister, they embraced the infantes declaring thē to be the inheritours of the kingdome of God, and that none should enter that kyngdome: vnlesse he woulde become as one of them. Thus haue I declared myne opinion concernynge the Baptisme of infantes (as I truste) sufficiētly to satisfy them that haue mistaken me, & to declare that all such sentences (in this litle boke) as doo so greatly impugne Baptisme without faith: are to be vnderstād so, that nether they that be of age ought to be Baptised without they do fyrst beleue and cōfesse Christ: nor the infantes onles the faythful congregation do with one assent offer thē at the font of regeneration with ful mynd and hertie desire to haue them membres of the church of Christ, hauyng most sure and certayn hope that God will worke in thē such maner of fayth as shal cause thē at the yeares of discretion to professe and folow the doctrine of Christ, to whom wyth the father and the holye goste bee all honour for euer and euer. So be it.

A BRIFE AND FAYTH full declaration of the true fayth of Christ, made by certeyne men suspected of herelye in these articles folowyng.

¶ 1. Thessalonians. v.

☞ Quenche not the spirite, despise not the prophecyynges, but proue all thynges, and kepe that, that is good.

¶ Esaye. v.

☞ Wo be vnto them that call good euyll, and euyl good, whyche make darkenesse lyght, and light darkenesse.

☞ ✠

¶ Anno. M. D. xlvii.
Per me I. B.

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

Seynge that saynte Paule sayeth to the Ephesiãs iiii. that there is but one fayth or beliefe, so may euery christen man hertely mourne, when he seeth that so manye and diuers faythes are founde, amonge them that boste them selues to be christen men. Also that the one dreadfully sclaundereth and with great tyranny persecuteth the other, and that wythout indifferencie. But also the lorde Jesu Christe hath sayed: that in the last dayes shall be many offended, and the one shall betraye the other, and the one hate the other. And that many false prophetes and false christen shal aryse and seduce many. For thys cause is it very necessary that euery christen man faythfully crye vnto God wyth continual prayer, that he wyl gyue hym a stedfast beliefe, and wyl kepe hym in the ryghte waye, that he do not go into croked wayes, through the gyle or disceyt of false hypocrysye of the false christen or prophetes. And God wyll doubtlesse kepe his electe from Sathan & his ministers, although the tyme be neuer so perylous, or neuer so many dampnable sectes be broughte forth, yea although the darkenesse shoulde couer whole Egypte, yet shall God neuertheles let his face lighten ouer all trewe Israelites, so that they shall knowe his wayes vpon the earth, and his saluacion amonge the heathen. And although Himeneus and Philetus do turne from the ryghte waye, neuertheleſſe the sure grounde of God standeth euer faste, and hath thys seale, that God knoweth them that are his. For we know wel that God (howe be it) that he out of his vnmeasurable mercye & grace, yea out of the vnexpressable loue of his fatherly hert, defendeth

his

his childrē frō al euyl, yet neuertheleſſe wyl he be prayed vnto of them as we haue many enſamples therof in ſcrypture, how that the holy men in theyr trybulacion or angwyſche haue called vnto god, and haue ben herd and holpen of hym. And ſeyng then that the ryght chriſten euer for theyr beſtes ſake greuouſly are troubled, yea as golde and ſyluer in the fyre bothe with bodely troble and fals doctryne vnderſought and proued: it is therfore very neceſſarye that we praye the lorde with all dilygence for a ryght vnderſtādyng of his godly worde, and for a ſure vnmouable fayth for euermor. Alſo it is not vnneceſſaeye þ they beare theyr beliefe, conteyned in wrytynge alwayes about them, and dayly rede it, partly to the exhortyng and conforteyng of them in all perſecution and tribulacions, which may come vnto them by goddes worde. Partly agayne for a defence agaynſte all antechryſtes ſpyrytes, whyche alwayes iudge the fayth of the rightuouſe, how chriſtenly ſo euer it be, and how manyfeſte ſo euer it agreeth with all godly ſcrypture, for an hereſye, yea for a deuelyſche doctryne and gyle ſhal it be compted. Dan. ii. Cor. vi. And of this ſo doynge, no man ſhall merueyle, ſeynge, that all ſayntes haue ben taken for tranſgreſſours or ſeducers, of this euill blynde worlde. Yea Jeſus Chriſte himſelfe though he be the euerlaſtynge truth (John. xiiii) was taken of vnwyſe Scribes and Phariſes, for a begyler of the people. Jhan. vii. yea for a mad man, and a man poſſeſſyd with the deuyl, o lorde what a blaſphemye. And his doctrine was not taken of them as goddes worde, but as a diſſeuable ſeducynge, not as breade of lyfe, nor as a medi

cine for the soule, but compted as a poyson or venym of the wycked serpent.

Seynge then that the Lorde dyd suffer, reason it is for the seruaunte to suffer also. And all that, that is come vpon the lorde, that muste (as trewlye as Goddes worde is) ouercome the seruaunt also.

Here vpon maye euerye seruaunt or disciple of Iesu Christe prepare hym for he must be readye, to suffer all confusion, sclaunder, and tribulation for hys Lorde and maysters sake.

We therfore perceyuynge thys, wyll not be moued wyth the sclaunder of the wycked people, the whyche sclaunder oure fayth for heresy, and yet many of them knowe not what we beleue, but as they here of oure aduersaryes, and therafter do they iudge vs. Notwithstandynge though we do not regarde theyr sclaunder, yet neuertheless wyll we (so farre as it is possible) mete them, & wryte (through the grace of God) oure fayth: because that euerye man maye reade it, and then may they wyth vnderstanding and with christen charitie iudge.

The which we, both of al good diligent readers, and also of oure aduersaryes frendely desyre, and mekely pray.

¶ Here endeth the Prologe.

I Beleue in God the father almighty, maker of heauē & earth. And in Jesu Christ hys onely sonne oure Lorde, whyche was conceyued by the holye goost, and borne of Marye the virgyn. He suffered vnder Poncius Pylate, he was crucifyed, dead and buryed. He descended to hell, and rose the thyrde daye from death. He ascended to the heauens, and sytteth on the ryght hande of God the father almyghty. And frō thens shal he come to iudge the quicke and dead. I beleue in the holy goost the holy churche catholyke, to be a congregacion of sayntes, to haue remission of synnes, the resurrection of the flesche, and the euerlastynge lyfe.

☞ At the fyrst we beleue in one God Deut. vi. & father of our lorde Jesus Christ. ii. Cor. i. the whyche is the Lorde of heauen and earth. Luke. xi. and creatour of al creatures. Hebr. i. Yea he is father of vs all. Ephe. iiii. the which hath elected vs to be his children through Jesu Christe. Ephe. i. And therfore shall we hym all onely worshyp, & beside hym none other gods. Deut. vi. Also we shall feare him as an almighty god. Psal. xxxiiii. and as a mercyfull father we shal loue him wyth al oure hertes, with all our soule, and wyth al our power and mynde. Mat. xxii. and vpon him muste stande all oure hope. Hiere. vii. For he is the father of lyghte. Jacob. i. of the whyche all mankynde lyueth, Actu. xvii. both bodelye goodes Prouerbee. x. euerlastynge saluacion. Psalm. xxxvii. togyther wyth al perfyte gyftes come and descended. Jacob. i.

☞ Forthermore we beleue in Jesu Christe, the sōne of the lyuing god our lorde. i. Cor. vii

The whiche is the very bryghtnesse of his fathers glorye, and the verye ymage of his substaunce. Hebre.i. Yea he is the onely begotten sonne of the father. John.i. come forth out of the mouth of the moste hyghest God. Eccles.i. xxiii.fyrst borne before all creatures. Collos.i. Thorowe the whiche all thynges are created. Heb.i. In whom we haue redempcion, namely remission of synnes thorow his bloude. Col.i. wyth the whyche he hath washed vs. Apoc.i. and hath also reconciled vs agayne to hys most holy and gloriouse father. Ephes.i.ii.that were afore enemyes to God. Roma.viii.

¶ For after the tyme that god had made man after his ymage and similitude, he set hym into Paradise, that he shoulde eate of al the frutes of the garden of pleasure, exceptynge hym the tre of knowledge of good & euyll. Gene.ii. But man hath disobeyed the Lorde his God, and transgressed his commaũdement. Gen.iii. Thorowe the whyche disobedience and transgression of the godlye commaundement, death and curse is come ouer all mankynde. Rom.v. And when there was no helpe nor comfort for man, wherby he myghte haue bene redemed or delyuered out of Sathans power. Then had God the mercyful father pitie vpon mankinde and promised thẽ a sead namely Jesus Christ, his onelye begotten sonne, the whiche shoulde treade vpon the head of the serpent, and ouercome the deuyll, and restore thẽ to lyke agayne. Gene.iii. And lyke wyse as god is ryghtuouse in al his wayes, and holye in all his workes. Psal.cxlv. and trew in al his wordes. Psal.li. so hath he kepte all his promyses truely. And as the tyme was fulfylled. Gala.iiii. God let

his

hys worde descende into the wombe of the vyrgyn Marye, and by the workynge of the holy gooste be came fleshe: as John wytnesseth saiyng: The word became flesh & dwelt amonge vs, & we saw his glory, as the glory of the onely begottē sonne of the father ful of grace and verite John .i. Also thys onely begotten sone of god by the powre of the holy ghoste became man and is become lyke vnto vs in all thinges except synne Hebre .ii. He hath suffered death for our sake. Esay.liii.and hath taken awaye Sathans powre, and restored lyfe in agyne.i. Timot .vi. yea he is made vnto vs wysdome and ryghtwysnes, sanctyfyenge and redemption.i.Cor.i. And lykewyse as he dyed for our synnes. Hebre.ii.so is he rysen agayn through the powre of his father Roma.vi.for our righ tuousnes Roma .iiii. And as he oftentymes shewed hym felfe after his resurreccyon, vnto his dyscyples .Acti.i so is he ascended into heauen in thyr presence. Luke .xxiiii. And sytteth at the right hande of the almighty father. Ro. viii. Aboue all rule, and myght, and dominion and aboue all that maye be named, not onely in thys world, but also in the world to come Cphesi.i. And hath subdewed all thynges vnder hys fete. Hebre.ii.in summa, he is alorde aboue all lordes, and a kyng aboue all kynges. Apo.xix.yea he is an almighty god with his father. Apo.xxii. John.x. And neuerthelesse he is also our onely aduocate and mediator .i. John .ii. Tymo .ii. our onely hye priest. Hebre .v. the sacrifyce that he hath done for our synnes, abydeth of valure for euermore. Hebre x.

☞ Forthermore likewyse as Christ our lord is ascended vp into heauen, so shall he come a-

gayne from heauen Act.i. wyth the dominion of his father, & with the angels. Mat.xxv. for to gyue euery man rewarde after his workes, yea for to iuge ỹ quicke & dead. Act.x. Tim.iiii

☞ We beleue also in the holy goſt god with the father & the ſõne, which holy goſte is a teacher of all chryſten. Joh.xiiii. and he doth cloth them with his gyftes, and giueth euery one the measure of feyth after his owne wyll. i. Corin xii. and kepeth them vnmouable in one fayth, for he is a ruler of the christian congregacyon Act.xx. He is also the anoyntement. i. John. ii. wherwith all christẽ are anoynted, and of that behalfe are called the anoynted of the lorde. Pſal.cviii.

☞ So is this holy goſt geuẽ vnto the christẽ as an erneſte of theyr inheryttaunce to theyr redempcyon, and they agayne be his owne to the prayſe of his glorye Epheſi. i. In ſumma it is impoſſible without this holy ghoſte to knowe god ryghtly. i. Cor. ii. or with all the hole herte to beleue vpon him. i. Corin. xii. or to call vpon him as a father. Roma. viii. And therfore doth god poure this his holy ghoſte vpon his children, whereby thei may rightly knowe him, and ryghtly beleue in hym, and as a ryght father call vpon hym. Gala. iiii.

☞ This is our beleefe to the father ſõne and holy ghoſte, which thre we knowledge to be one god. Deut. vi. whoſe ſeate is the heauen, and the erth is a benche of his fete. Eſay. xlvi. yea the which is an euerlaſtynge. ii. Mach. i an almyghty. Pſal. cxv. a ryhgteouſe. Pſa. ii. and a mercyfull god. Pſal. cxlv. The which alone wylbe worſchypped and ſerued. Deu. vi. For he can alone helpe vs. Eſaye. xliii. whyche

he

he doth for his names sake & not for oure eygh tuousenes sake Esay.xliii.

☞ Forthermore as we haue said that al they that do beleue are ioyned togyther, & through the holy goost knitte in vnitie, so is there a christen church, the wich is buylded of lyuing stones .i.Pet.ii. which church is the house of god. Heb.iii. & the house of god is the congregacion of God.i.Timot.iii. and the congregacyon of God is the bodye of Christ. Ephesians.i. And seynge that al right christians are one bodye.i. Cor.x. in the which they al through one spirite are baptised.i.Cor.xii. So muste there be a cōmunion of sayntes, namely that al sayntes or true beleuers are also ioyned togyther in vnitie, as the membres of one body. Rom.xii. And in this cōmuniō of saintes is remission of sinnes, & that wout it is no sinne forgiuē, nor any hope of saluacion. Ephe.ii. yea like as it is vnpossible ꝑ a mēbre cā lyue that is not in the body, so is it possible ꝑ any man may lyue in hys soule, & cā be releaced out of death by remissiō of synne, the which is not a mēbre of the body of Christ. For Christ hath reconciled vs al vnto god his father in one bodye. Ephe.ii. And therfore must al they stāde in variaūce ꝑ are no mēbres of this body, of ꝑ which Christ is ꝑ head. Eph.i. to the which he giueth saluaciō. Eph.v

☞ Now must we also knowe that howe be it that God alwayes forgiueth synnes. Esay. xliii. yet hath Christ giuen vnto his congregacion power to bynde and to lowse which shall not be vnderstāde after the antichrist doctrine the byshoppe of Rome hath power to remitte synnes, but the christen congregacion whose heade is Christe, and not the Romyshe Antechrist,

chryst, and is rewled of the holy goost and not of the fornicatyche spirite of the Pzophetysse Jesabell. Thys congregacion I saye hath power to bynde & lowse (that is to saye) all what she byndeth other lowseth is done by the power of oure Lozde Jesu Chryste .i. Coz. v. and thozow the holy goste, as a rewler of the chrystен congregacion. Actu. xx. so is there in the chrysten congregacion remission of synnes.

☞ There shal be also a general resurrection of the flesche, namely that all they that are dead shal ryse agayne, some to euerlastyng lyfe, and some to euerlastyng dampnacion. John. v And they that shall lyue and remayne vntyl the cõmyng of our Lozde Jesu Chryste, they shall be chaunged in the twynkelynge of an eye, at the tyme of the last trompet. i. Cozhin. xv. Foz the trompet (sayth Paule) shal blow, and the dead shal ryse vncozruptible, and we shalbe chaũnged. Foz this cozruptible body must put on vncozruptibilitie, and thys mozta11 bodye muste put on immozta1itie. i. Cozhin. xv.

☞ At the laste is there also an euerlastynge lyfe. John. xvii. whyche all they shall receyue that beleue on Jesu Jhryst. John. vi. and stedfastlye abyde in good wozkes seekynge prayse honour, and immozta1itie. Roma. ii.

☞ Thys is the summe of oure beliefe, yea and a ryght chrysten beliefe, thozowe the which sayth all ryghtuoule lyue. Abac. ii. And wyth out the whych beliefe no man may please god. Heb. xv. Therfoze must the euerlastynge God be blessed, that out of his immeasurable mercy and grace, hath gyuen vs thys sayth thozowe Jesu Chryste. Ephe. ii. And this is the some of our sayth wyth the shozteste.

¶ The sacrament of Baptysme.

B. Aptysme is a sacramenttall token, the whiche is geuen vs of Christe. Math. xxviiii. And is at the fyrste an entrynge into the christen congregacyon (as Paule sayth) we are baptysed in one spirite to be one bodye. 1. Corynt. xii.

☞ Secondarily, it is a fountayne of regeneracion, as Paul witnesseth, saying that Christ hath saued vs by the fountayne of the newe byrthe, and renewynge of the holy gooste. Tit. iii. Not that the water doth saue vs, for nothynge can saue vs, but onely god, Esay. xliii. But after that our Lorde Jesu christ hath spoken: that he that beleueth and is baptised shal be saued. Mar. xvi. and Goddes worde is veritie. Johan. xvii. and his promyses maye not fayle. Psal. cxlvii. Therefore muste baptisme neades bringe saluacion vnto them that in beliefe are baptised, not for the workes sake, but for goddes worde and promises Deu. viii.

☞ Thyrdely baptysme is a couenaunt of a good conscience to god. 1. Pet. iii. namelye that he that in beliefe is baptised, bindeth him selfe or maketh a couenauut with god: that from thens forth he wyll lyue after hys wyll. And of this couenauntes behalfe, whiche muste be done out of a cleane faythfull herte, hath the baptysme powre, and not for the waters sake, wherwith the fylthynesse of the flesche myghte be washed awaye. But wythout it be that the hertes of them that are baptysed, be cleansed. Act. xv. thorowe Goddes worde. John. xv. the water can not cleanse them. Wherwith it is also proued, that baptisme without fayth may in no wyse be broked.

☞ Forthly baptisme sygnifieth an offeryng

of

of the flesche, and a resurrectyon into a newe lyfe, as we haue vnto the Romaines. know ye not (sayeth Paule) that al we whiche are baptysed, in the name of Jesu Christe, are baptysed, to dye wyth hym. Therfore are we buryed wyth hym by baptysme for to dye, that lyke wyse as Christ was raysed vp from death, by the glory of the father, euē so we should walke in a newe lyfe. &c. Rom. vi. This is now shortly expressed what baptysme is, and what it signifyeth. Nowe muste we also knowe, that seynge no good worke wythout fayth maye be done. Rom. xiiii. So muste he that shal be baptysed beleue, or els he can not ryghtly be baptised, as we maye clearelye vnderstande in the wordes of Christ Jesu, wherwyth he hath instytute this baptysme, and commaunded his apostles, sayinge: Go and preache the gospell to al creatures, he that beleueth and is baptysed, shalbe saued. Mar. xvi. Here wyll no sophistycall reasonynges and dreames be alowed, for the Lorde wyll destroye the wysedome of the wyse, and wyll take awaye the vnderstanding of the prudent, and wyl make the wisedome of thys worlde folishnesse. i. Cor. i. and. iii. But the worde of God shal abyde for euer. i. Pet. i. And Christe sayeth: that heauen and earth shal perishe, but my wordes shal abide. Mat. xxiiii. Therfore muste also the wordes of Christe (he that beleueth and is baptysed &c.) not be altered or chaunged. And seynge that Christe hath instituted or ordeyned fayth afore baptisme, so muste he that shal be baptised beleue, or els the wordes of Christ suffereth force, and are wholye and falselye altered and chaunged, as we now a dayes alas may se, and it is a miserable

thynge

thynge, that thys baptysme is so euyll vnder-
stande, and so shamefully broken. And seynge
that the scripture doth so clearely therof wyt-
nesse. Though that all the wytnesses of scrip-
ture perteynyng to thys matter, be not here al-
ledged for the shortnesse sake, yet do we take
out one of them, namely the example of the A-
postle Philip, which when he shewed Goddes
worde vnto the gelded man, whyche was the
chamberlayne to Candas, Quene of the Mo-
ryans, and he him selfe desyred to be baptised,
but the trewe minister of god Philip, woulde
not baptyse hym, excepte he dyd not onely be-
leue, but also openly cõfessed it. Act. viii. This
example is well worthye to be marked, for at
the fyrste we maye se here the greate diligence
and howe desyrous the chamberlayne was of
baptysme, whyche is a learnyng vnto al them
that loue theyr saluacion, that they shal desyre
thys worke hertelye, and not deferre it, but as
sone as they by hearyng of the worde of God.
Roma. x. wyth the operacion of the holy goost
i. Cor. xii. hath receyued fayth. And yf there be
any mã that wyl not be satisfied with this ex-
ample of Philip, let hym perceyue also howe
Ananias dyd compel Paule, saying vnto him:
why tarryest thou? aryse and be baptysed, and
washe awaye thy synnes, Actu. xxii. Here we
se that Baptysme, after the fayth is receyued,
maye not be deferred. Therfore hath the cham
berlayne with greate diligence desyred baptis-
me after that he dyd beleue, saying vnto Phi-
lip: Beholde here is water, what shoulde lette
me to be baptysed? Actuum. viii. Forthermore
seynge the trewe minister of God Philippe,
woulde not baptyse hym, excepte he confes-
sed

sed his sayth: doubtlesse he hath therwyth teached vs, that all they that wyll be baptysed, muste confesse theyr belicke, as ye se the chamberlayne dyd.

But for as muche as all the former scriptures are spoken of them onelye that bee of yeres of discretion before they receyue the sayeth of Christ: It is no altering of the institution and worde of Christe, to baptyse the innocentes and vnbeleuynge infauntes, whyche haue not as yet receyued the vse of reason, wherby they myght decerne sayth to beleue and professe the name of Christe. For as in the circumcision of the olde lawe the sayth of the parentes sufficed to make the chylde one of the chosen people of God, notwythstandyng that the circumcision of the flesh is not circūcision (as Paule wrytteth to the Romaynes) but the circumcision of the herte, euen so in the baptisme of our infantes, notwythstandynge that the washing of the body in water is not baptysme, but the washynge of the soule in the bloude of Christe by sayth: yet shall the sayth of the parentes be accepted of God and theyr chyldren made mēbers of the churche of Christe therby. Yf anye require wytnesses of the scripture for thys assertion: lette hym reade and consyder well the storye of Samson, and Samuell, wyth other lyke storyes of the olde testament, wherin may easilye be perceyued how god dyd then accepte the chyldren for the parentes sayth. Let him cōsyder also the stories of the gospel, wherin appeareth how Christ woulde not haue the chyldrē kepte frō him when theyr parētes brought them to hym that he myght laye his handes vpon them, and how certeyne chyldren were cu-

red

red of diseases euen for the fayeth that was founde in theyr parentes. And laste of all it is euident both in the Actes, and Epistles of the Apostles, that when certeyne men receyued the gospell, both they and theyr whole housholdes were baptysed. Where it is not to be thought that the infantes were reiected, bycause they could not vnderstande the Apostles preaching. For sayncte Paule wryttynge to the Corinthians as concernynge the chyldren begotten betwene an heathen man and a faythfull woman, or betwene an heathen woman & a faythfull man: sayeth that the chyldren are cleane by the reasone that one of his parentes is faythfull. And what other thynge shoulde he meane therby but that God accepteth those chyldren for members of his churche, whom the faythfull parentes do wyllyngly bryng to the fountayne of regeneratiō, there to receyue the signe of the euerlastynge couenaunte betwene God and vs? And yf any man wyl wyllingly withstande Christe and his Apostles, and do other wyse then Christe hath commaunded, and his Apostles taughte and dyd, he is blynded, but his blyndnesse shall ware manifest well ynough. Lykewyse as the Egyptians sorcerars, the whiche wythstode Moyses and Aaron, but at the laste were manifestlye seen and knowen.

ii. Timo. iii. Thys is wyth the shortest the fayth of our baptisme.

¶ Of the supper of the lorde.

THe supper of the lorde, is a memoriall toke of the suffering and death of Jesu Christe and is instituted of Christe for this cause, that the faythfull congregacyon of Jesu Christ, sholde come together, for to shewe the death of Jesu Christ, and his benefytes, laudynge and thankynge hym, magnyfyenge his holy name, and then also eate of this bread and dryncke of thys wyne, to a remembraunce that Christe hath gyuen his body and shed his blonde for vs. Math xxvi. And because that it is a comyn vse that a token of remembraunce hath the name of the thynge that is remembred by it. Therfore hath Christ called the breade his bodye, and the wyne his blonde: not that his substaunce is in the breade and wyne, but that we sholde remember hym therby. Lykewyse as the easter lābe was called the passyng by, and yet was it not in it selfe the very passyng by, but a token or remembraunce of the passyng by. Seynge now that the easter lambe hath the name of the thing that the Israelites remembred by it, and wherby they myght euerlastyngly kepe in remembraunce the benefytes of god, right conuenient is it that Christe hath called the breade his body, and the wyne hys bloud because that we shoulde remēber therby his death and passion, yea the only sacrifice of his body, whiche he hath suffered to be broken and his bloud to be shed for vs. Neuertheles how be it that the materyall body of Christe is not in the bread, nor his blonde in the wyne, yet neuertheles is the supper of the Lorde a parttakynge (but spyrytually) of the body and bloud of Christe, as Paule sayth: Is not the cuppe of thankes geuyng wherwith we gyne

thankes,

thākes, a parte taking of the bloud of Christ? And the bread that we breake, is it not the partakyng of the body of Chryste? These wordes of Paule do witnesse clerely that the faythfull eate the body of Christ spiritually, vnder the breade and wyne yea lykewyse as a bryde receyueth her housbande with a ryng, euen so receyue the faithfull Christe to be theyr owne and euerlastyng saluacyon. But that some men wyll haue that the bodyly presence shold be in the breade, is a great mysse vnderstandyng of the godly worde: yea it is an antechrystes doctryne, which is contrary bothe to our fayth and to al holy scrypture. For we beleue and holy scrypture beareth wytnes, that Chryste after his resurrection is ascended vp into heauen, and sytteth vpon the ryght hand of his almighty father. Rom. viii. And bideth ther as concernyng hys bodyly presence, but spiritually he hath promised to abide with vs to the ende of the worlde in hys worde Mat. xxviii. And seyng that now Chryste as concernyng his bodely presence abydeth at the eyght hand of his father Hebr. x. so may not the body of Chryste be in the breade. And agayne it is agaynst all truth that Chryste at one tyme hath ben in many or diuers places, as touching his body. Forthermore we do dayly se what dredful ydolatrye is sprong out of the carnall vnderstandyng of these wordes of Chryste: This is my body, and yet dayly springeth, to the great and abominable slaunder of the honoure of god so that men worshype a piece of breade for theyr god, yea and holde that to be theyr maker. And the papystes locke hym in golde and syluer, not remēbryng what Paule

and Stephen wytnesse sayenge: The moost hyghest wyll not dwell in temples made wyth mannes handes. Actes. vii. and. xvii. O blynde men that are so bewytched of the whore, that ye can not nor wyll not beleue the manifeste truth, O blyndnesse and great presumptuousnesse of the papistes, that wyll take vpon them to fetche Jesu Christe out of heauen, into a piece of breade, whyche is consumable, as we clearelye se by experience, and that it shoulde be worshypped for God, whyche is euerlastynge and vnchaungeable. Nowe what remedye for we can not helpe it, therfore muste we do as the Lorde Jesu Christe spake vnto hys apostles of the pharisees, sayinge: Let them go for they are blynde, and leaders of the blinde, whē one blynde leadeth an other, so fall they both into the dytche. Mat. xv. But the Lorde muste be thāked that out of his vnmeasurable grace hath opened our eyes, that we can se & knowe, wherfore we shal take the bread and the wyne in the supper, namely for a memoriall and token of the sufferyng and death of Jesu Christ yea for the body and bloud of Christe: but that for the by names sake, and not of the material thynges behalfe, as is aboue rehearsed of the Easter Lambe.

☞ Forthermore the supper of the Lorde is also a ioynynge togyther of the christen cōgregacion in loue. And also the congregacion that wyl holde thys supper, muste be well appoynted and ioyned togyther in brotherly loue, yea they must stande in one spirite and soule. Philip. i. hauing a burnyng loue. For Paule sayth: we many are one breade and one bodye, in as muche as we are partakers of one bread. Lyke

wyse

wiſe as ꝑ mẽbres of one body are not in ſtryke one agaynſte an other: but in a charitable vnitie ſeruynge one an other. i. Corhi. xii. ſo maye there no ſtryfe nor debate be founde in the congregacion of God. i. Corhm. i. ſo that any man ſhoulde onely care and take thought for hym ſelfe, and not care nor loke vpon his brothers lacke, but the one muſte helpe and care for the other in al thynges neceſſary, where he can or maye. Gal. vi. and no man muſt ſeke that, that is his, but euery one the others wealth. Philip. ii. And lykewiſe as of the graynes of corne can not be baken breade, but through fyre: euẽ ſo can not the congregacion be a right ſpirituall loke (wherof Paule ſpeaketh) but through burnyng loue & charitie. And ſo ought ꝑ chriſtẽ congregacion to be one loke. i. Cor. x. For lykewyſe as many graynes are ſowen to the entẽt that breade ſhoulde be baked of it. So ſoweth the greate father of houſholde his precioule wheate into the acre or grounde of this world, to the entent that they all ſhoulde become one loke, and breake the ſupper of the Lorde rightly after the wordes of Paule: we many are all one breade and one body, in as much as we are parte takers of one breade. i. Cor. x. And where ſo euer the congregacion is not ſo apoynted and the breade broken in thys maner, there is the bread eaten, and the wyne drõken to a iudgement, from the whiche God the mercyful father wyll defende and kepe all diligent louers of the euerlastyng trueth thorowe his vnerpreſſable goodneſſe and mercye. Amen.

Of the very christian kyngdome.

WE beleue also that god the heauenly father, hath gyuen to his onely begotten sone Jesu Christe, al powre in heauen and erth Math. xxviii. yea as Paule sayth: He hath set hym on his ryght hande in heauenly thynges aboue all powre, rule, myght and dompnyon, and aboue al that maye be named not onely in this worlde, but also in the worlde tocome. Ephe. i. Aboue all this hath the heauenly father especyally instituted and ordeined Jesu Christ his onely begotten sonne, to be a kyng ouer the mount of Syon that is to say, ouer the fayth full congregacyon. Psalm. ii whiche faythful congregacion is the kyngdome of Chryst. Col. i. And the dompnyon of thys kyngdome standeth not in a carnall dominion or powre: But lykewise as the lorde is a spirite. ii. Corinthians. iii. euen so is hys kyngdome spirituall inwardly within vs. Luke. xvii. and not of this worlde. John. xviii. wherefore the prophete zacharie promysed vs a kynge thorough the holy ghoste, the which shold not come with diabls dominion, nor great worldly tryumphe, but with an humble and a meke spyrite, and shoulde not rule as a worldly kynge ouer the carnal Syon or Israel, but shoulde raygne a spirytuall kynge, and rule the spirituall Israelytes with the scepter of his godly worde. And these are the wordes of the prophet. Reioyse thou greatly O doughter Syon, be glad O doughter Jerusalem, beholde thy kynge cometh vnto the lowly and symple is he, he rideth vpon an Asse and vpon the foole of an Asse, euen thy rightwyse and sauyour, and he hym selfe is poore zac. ix. These wordes of the prophete wytnesse

clearely that Christes kyngdome is spirituall, and standeth not in any outward dominion. Johan .xviii. And lykewyse all these prophetes do witnesse in these chappters folowing. Esa. liii. ix. Jerem. xxiii. xxxii. Ezechi. xxxiiii. xxxvii. Mych. iiii. Therfore do we holde the doctryne of the carnal kingdome of Christ to be a dredfull errowr, and a great herelye, yea we holde it to be an heerelye, of the Chiliastes, the which now agayne is rayled amongest the of Mynster, & hath breyded her out in other places, to the great slaunder and hinderaunce of the true gospel of god. Forthermore yf any man take vpon him and presume to be the promysed Dauyd or a kynge of Syon as John Layden at Mynster hath done, hym do we holde for an antechriste aboue all antichristes, yea boue the Rompysh Antechryste. How dredful so euer he hath slaundered god, and exalted hym selfe agaynst the almighty god, and yet it is not com to suche an abhominacion, as to put hym selfe a kynge of Syon, or to take vpon hym to be a promysed dauyd: But in these dayes ryse so many abhominable and presumptuous spirite fulfylled with all maner of wyckednes, and sathans pryde, that take vpon them to robbe Jesu Christe of his kingli scepter, and to take it vnto them selfes: wo be vnto all suche dredfull slaunderers of the godly maiesty or powre. wo be also vnto the seducers which go about with witchecrafte wherwith they haue begyled many men. Wooe be also vnto all them whyche do not seperate them selues frō those antechrystes and seducers, but yet do seke help or comforte of them, yea that leaue the verye Woysen Jesu Christ and desire other goddes

to go afore them, vpon the shal fal that which is spoken of by the prophete Jeremye: Lorde they that do forsake the shalbe destroyed, and they that turne from the shall be ashamed, and theyr names shall be wrytten in the earthe, for they haue leaft the, the lyuynge fountayne of water. Beholde therfore wyll we by the grace of God, abyde by oure spirituall kynge Jesu Christe, and pray hym that his kyngdome may encrease in vs, yea that he wyll defende vs from all euyll and reserue vs to his euerlastyng heauenly kyngdome, to his glory and honoure for euer. Amen.

¶ The weapons wherwyth a very christian ought to fyght.

SEynge that the whole Gospell of oure Sauiour wytnesseth that the christian must suffer, & in no wyse may reuenge the euil. So that we thynke by the helpe of god, not to turne from the holsome doctrine of our Lorde Jesu Christ. For it is righte conuenient that a seruaunt wyth his lordes cõmaundement, and a disciple wyth his maysters doctrine to be cõtented. What? And here now may no sophistical cauillacions nor fonde ymaginacions be alowed, as though the wordes of Jesu Christe shoulde nowe be at an ende. And seynge that Christ sayth vnto his apostles: what I say vnto you, that do I saye vnto al, watche ye, heauen and earth shal perisshe, but my wordes shal neuer perysshe. Therfore do we holde them for dreadful seducers and abominable heretykes, that wyll presume to saye, that the doctrine of

Jesu Christ (as cõcernyng suffering) should be at an ende, & that the christen shoulde no more nede to suffer, but that they shoulde cast away the weapons wherw̃ the apostles haue fought as theyr epistles rehearse, & put vpon them the harnys of Dauid, yea that they shoulde destroy the whole worlde w̃ the material swoorde and also take the worlde vnto them selues. O what a blinde dreame is this, which is sprong out of Sathã, & is cõtrary to the whole gospel of our lorde Jesu Christ. O what an iniquitie is this of thẽ, that wyl with the chyldrẽ of Israel leaue the lorde the foũtayne of lyuing waters, & dygge them selues pyttes the whyche do seme fayre, but they cã giue no water. O what a blindnes, yea what a folyshnes is it of them, that for the sayinges of the prophetes, whyche they vnderstande not, wyll refuse & leaue the moste highest prophet, the onely begottẽ sonne of god, & the euerlastynge veritie Jesu Christe and do not dreade to exalte the olde testamente aboue the new, & to set Moyses aboue Christ? O god shal now the new testament auoyed for the olde, & shal the precioufe bloud of the innocent lambe Jesu Christ be coũted lesse then the bloud of calues? O lorde how are these mẽ so blynded that they with the stykkenecked Israelites do abhorre the lyuing breade of heauen, and do desyre the flesh of Egypt, that is to say they do refuse Jesu Christe the very breade of heauen, & do huger after mennes doctrine and inuẽted dremes, & after discrepuable prophetes? But we wyl by the grace of god abyde by our lorde & maister Jesu Christ, & holde it vndeniable, that no vncleane doctrine whiche myghte be agaynst the gospel of our lorde Jesu Christ

maye be broughte in or suffered, but he alone muste be alowed, for he is lorde maister & Sauiour, & beside him is none other. In summa we know of none other veritie, nor of none other waye, of none other lyfe, but onely of Iesu Christe. Iohn. xiiii. For this cause yt there come any prophecies or visions that wil draw vs from this holsome doctrine of Iesu Christ they muste be accursed. Furthermore how and wyth what weapons that the christian shall fyghte, doth Paule clearelye teache vs to the Ephesians in the syxte Chapter wyth these wordes: Stande therfore and your loynes gyrded about wyth the truth, hauyng on, the brest plate of righteousenes, and shodde vpon your fete wyth the gospell of peace, that you maye be prepared, aboue all thynges take holde of the sheilde of fayth, wher wyth ye may quentch the fyry dartes of the wycked, & take the helme of saluacion, and the sworde of he spirite, whyche is the worde of God. And Iohn sayth All that is borne of god ouercometh the world. And this is the victorye that ouercometh the worlde, euen our fayth. Who is it that ouercometh the worlde, but he that beleueth that Iesus is the sonne of God. Out of these wordes of Iohn maye all ryght christians wel vnderstande that the victorye standeth in an vpryghte fayeth, and not in anye carnall and outwarde weapon. And we do holde it wyth the Apostle Iohn, and are also content wyth Paule, so that we wyl holde wyth them, all straunge doctrine whyche myght be contrary to the Gospell of Iesu Christe, for vtterly accursed. Gala. i.

Of Matrymonye.

OF matrymonye we do hold now in the newe testament not after the wyl of Moyses nor after the enlampel of the patriarches, but as god instytuted it in paradyse, and as it was restituted agayne of Chryste, and brought agayn to the fyrst institucion, namely that Matrimony is a ioynynge togyther of .ij. persons, that is to say a man and a woman, after the wordes of the lord: They two shall be one flesche. Genes. ii. And for this cause hath Paule commaunded the byshopes & deacons, euery one of thē to be a housband of one wyfe. Out of the whiche texte muste nedes folowe, that no chrysten man may haue more then one wife, or els had Paule robbed the byshoppes and deacons of theyr comon chrysttian lybertye, yea he had tangled them in a snare, which is vnpossyble. i. Cor. vi. So is it not to be foūde in any apostels wrytynge, that any Chrysten man in or after the apostels tymes hath bene Polygamus (that is to saye) hath had manye wyues. What ꝑ the apostles haue not taught nor vsed, in theyr congregacyon, that shal not wee teache nor vse as an necessarye thinge to mans saluacyon. For els muste it folowe that the apostels had not knowen nor taught all the trueth, which is against the wordes and promise of Jesu Christ, which promised to his apostels sayeng: when the conforter the holy ghoste shal come he shall teache you all the trueth. Jhon. xiiii. And Paul toke god to witnesse ꝑ present day that he was pure from the bloud of al mē for he had kept nothing backe but had shewed them all the coūsell of god, Acti. xx. Nowe is it well knowen that Paule taughte not that a Chrysten man shoulde haue many wyues, and

therfore it is not the counsell or wyll of God: but muche more is the counsel and wyl of god, that a christian shall haue but one wyfe. Seynge that all the newe Testament alway speaketh of one man and one wyfe, as appeareth by these chapiters Mathewe. xix. Marke. x. i. Timothe. iii. Titu. i. i. Corinth vii. Ephe. v. And therfore can not we approue the Jewes Poligamians the whyche some haue begonne. But we holde vs after the ensample of Adam and Eue, and also in thys matter it is restituted agayne by Christe. Mathew xix. Marke. x. we are also wel cõtented with Paule, which doth saye that for auoydyng fornication euerye man shall haue his owne wyfe, and euerye woman her owne husbande Also that Matrimony is a ioynynge togyther of man and woman, after the worde of the Lorde: These two shall be one flesh. Genelis. ii. Mathewe. xix. Marke. x. Ephesians. v.

☞ Thys is the confession of oure fayth, in the which we hope that nothyng shal be foũde but the pure trueth of the Gospell, yf so be that it be not iudged after mannes good thynkynge, but onelye after the rule of thy Godlye worde. And notwythstandynge bycause that we wyll gyue no place vnto the sclaunderers, that of a presumptuouse hygh mynded spirite myghte sclaunder or rayle vpon vs, we are alwayes readye, and offer our selues, that yf any christen man beyng learned in the scripture, can reproue vs wyth Goddes worde in anye thynge that shoulde fayle vs of the trueth, to hym we shall and wyll alwayes gladly as disciples vnto theyr maister gyue place, and gladly wyth all ioyfulnesse of the spirite, receyue al

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christen doctrine of hym. Seynge that Peter a prince of the Apostles muste suffer that he was rebuked of Paule, reasone it is that we shoulde suffer to be rebuked, yf we throughe mannes ignoraunce were fallen in erroure, we that are poore seruaũtes of the Lorde, & skantly haue receyued one pounde, where as Peter had receyued fyue, the whyche our vnderstandyng is no more to be lykened to the high apostles wisdome, then a gnat by a camell. And we know also that Solomon sayth: Be not wyse in thyne owne conceyte. And agayne: He that refuseth to be refourmed, despiseth his owne soule, but he that submitteth hym selfe to correction is wyse. And for thys cause wyl we alwayes be diligent to heare, and with all mekenes submitte our selues vnto him, that coulde teach vs any doctrine, more agreable to the holy scripture: But yf any man wyll condempne our fayth without the iudgement of scripture & iudge it after the prouerbe: as the blinde iuggeth the colour, that muste & wyl we suffer for gods sake. Also yf any mã wil be our Pharao and treade vs downe bicause ẏ we be Israelites or fayne would be, in this wyl we also cõfort vs wͭ the holy scripture, hoping ẏ our heauẽly father shall haue mercy ouer vs, through Iesu Christ, & strẽgth vs so wͭ his holy goste, ẏ we shal not care for the dreadful sclaũder ouer our fayth. And we perceyuing ẏ blyndnes of the comõ people, & the great tyrãny of certẽ princes, so ẏ the comõ people are so blinded in their memory, ẏ they cã not iudge the light frõ darkenes nor the right frõ vnrightuousnes or lyes frõ the truth, yea they crie ouer Iesu that be shalbe crucified, and Barabas shalbe let go.

And

And also dyuers prynces are so full of tyranny that they do persecute the chrysten, and wythout any mercy put them to the moste greuous and cruell death, not remembryng that the innocent bloude of the ryghtuouse Abell cryeth for vengeaunce, agaynste the murderer Cain, vnto God in heauen. Neuertheleſſe the scripture muſt be fulfilled, namely that all they that wyll lyue godly in Chryste Jesu, muste ſuffer perſecucyon. And chryſt ſayth to his apoſtels: Haue they perſecuted me, they ſhall alſo perſecute you. And therfore ſaith John in his epiſtle: Behold what loue the father hath ſhewed on vs, that we ſhould be called his chylderne: Therfore the worlde doth not knowe you, becauſe it knoweth not hym. With thoſe and more other ſcriptures, maye wee comforte our ſelues, and eſpecyallye wyth the wordes of Chryſte, ſayeng: Bleſſed are they that ſuffer perſecucyon for ryghtuouſnes ſake, for theyrs is the kyngdom of heauen. Bleſſed are ye whē men reuyle you and perſecute you, and falſely ſay all maner euill ſayenges agaynſte you, for my names ſake. Reioyſe and be glad, for great is your rewarde in heauen. And we praye god our heauenly father, thorow oure lorde Jeſu Chryſte, the which out of his vnmeaſurable mercye and grace, hathe gyuen vs a clere vpryght fayth, that he kepe and reſerue vs forth in thys perylous tyme, frome all falſe doctrynes of the myniſters of the helliſh Sathan. And that we thorowe the Iungells coloure, wherwith they often tymes haue vpon them, may not be peruerted to leaue the trueth of god. And forthermore do wee praye vnto the lorde, that he wyll ſo ſtrength and forſtyke vs with

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his holy gooste, that we do not ware wery ofn: ſuffrynge perſecution for the ryghtuouſneſſet ſake: but that we maye be able to ſtande in all dreadfull ſclaunder, and tyrannous perſecuci- ons of the wycked Antechriſtes ſpirites, yea and that we rather, yf it be neade ſuffer thys bodely death, byding in our fayth, then we ſhoulde forſake it, and dye eter- nally. Frō the which eternal death the Lorde God preſerue al them that loue and ſeke hym wyth all theyr hert though Jeſu Chriſte our Saui- our. To whom be laude, prayſe, honour, ma- ieſtie, and domi- nion, for euer. Amen.

NOthing cā be so plain, so manifest or ope: but the cauillour (who seketh nothing els but doubtes) wil finde aboūdaunce of matter therin, to make the same, at the fyrste syght to appeare harde, obscure and darke. In like maner, be the lyueynge of the faythfull beleauers in Christe neuer so Godly and agreable to the truth, be it neuer so quiet, peaceable and ciuile: yet wyl the aduersaries fynde matter ynough to deface it so, that the simple people shal iudge none other but that they be heretykes, & theyr lyues, abhominable, theyr sayinges & doynges sedicioulse, disquiet and sclaunderouse. What man can deuyse to wryte more Godlye then Paule dyd to the Romaynes? And yet were there some that sayed he woulde haue men to synne, to the intente that the mercye of God myght be the more aboundaunt in the forgiueynge of the same. Roma. iii. Who coulde leade so godly a lyfe, in suche austeritie, and hardenesse as Iohn the Baptiste dyd? And dyd not the Iewse saye that he had a dyuell in hym? To be briefe, who coulde frequent the company of synners and misleueynge people, wyth so perfyte example of lyueynge, haueynge so great force to drawe them from theyr wickednesse to folowe his example, as Christe dyd? And dyd not the Pharisies repute hym to be a frende and mayntayner of euyll lyuers and open synners? Math. xi. The same schole maister that instructed these false detractours: hath also, and doeth daylye, instructe oure papistes, in the same his documentes, and playne lections. The deuyll I saye, leaueth not hys olde practyse, but kepeth his dearelye beloued in vre wythal. Yf any man preache or wryte of

the iustificacion by fayeth, and doe therin declare the vnworthinesse of vs and our workes whyche can deserue nothinge towarde our iustificacion: incõtinent they crye out vpon hym heretyke, he sayeth men shal be saued thoughe they lyue neuer so vngodlye. Yf he speake any thynge concernynge the abuse of the ceremonies and sacramentes: what exclamacions do they make? howe do they reporte hym to be a sacramentarye? Yf he speake anye thynge of Baptisme: declaryng that neyther the holynes of the water, neyther of the oyle, can gyue the grace therin promised, and that the washynge in the founte auayleth not them that obserue not the profession they make there: howe detestable an anabaptiste shall he be compted? Of the supper of the Lorde, who can wryte or speake any thynge concernyng the abuse therof, but he is charged wyth the vtter deniall of the same? That thou therfore (christen reader) mayst so wythdrawe thy credyt frõ these falle reporters, that thou wylte but once thynke it possible that they maye belye these men, whom they cal men of the newe learnyng: I haue set forth thys lyttle boke wherein thou mayste se what fayth they haue, that beare thys euyl reporte. And that thou mayste therby be prouoked fyrste to trye the spirites whether they be of God or not, and after to credyt them euen as thou shalte fynde them worthye. The prouerbe teacheth the, that it is not all golde that glyttereth, and we haue learned by experience, that it is not all Gospell that the priest preacheth. Trye the golde therfore by the touche stone, & the priestes preachinge by the worde of God. Proue the spirites, and knowe for certen

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tentie that, that spirite is not of God: whyche denieth that Christe is come in the flesche. And what other thynge is that, then to denye that hys comynge in the flesche is the sufficient and onelye satisfaction for oure synnes: Who so euer he be therfore, that denieth vs to be freelye redeamed by Christe wythout any part of our desertes: the same denyeth Christe to be come in the flesche. If thou proue them therfore, once to haue denyed on thys wyse that Christ came in the flesh: I beseech ỹ, euen for Christes sake: to trye theyr reportes by the scripture or thou credyt them. And thē as thou fyndest them so take them. The Lorde open the eyes of thyne herte that thou mayst se the hydde and secretes abhominations.
Amen.

☞ Praye Christian reader that the worde of the Lord may haue free passage, and that we may lyue a God ly lyfe there after, that it may be acceptable in hys syght.

FINIS.